

Ataturk was a devout believer

Ataturk was a devout believer with a profound respect for Allah, the Qur'an and Islam. One can see that devotion in his words and deeds. Ataturk said it was impossible for an irreligious person to live and frequently describes the beauties of Islam, the last and true faith.

... In my view, even irreligious types are believers. It is impossible for a person to be irreligious. Nobody can be irreligious. (02. 02. 1923, Izmir, Speech on the Future of Turkey.)

"Religion is human beings' nourishment. An irreligious man is like an empty house. He distresses people. We must always believe in something. This last of the faiths is of course the most perfect. Islam is superior to all faiths... (Ataturk and Religious Education, Ahmet Gürbaş, Department of Religious Affairs Press, p. 2)

'Our nation possesses a powerful virtue, religion. No power has ever removed that virtue from the heart and conscience of the nation, and never can.'

Religion is an essential element. Nations with no religion cannot survive.

The Turkish nation must be more devout. It must be devout in all simplicity. I believe this in the same way I believe in my faith..." (Ataturk's Words and Statements, Vol. 3, p. 69-70, 29.10.1923, statement to the French author Maurice Pernot)

He said that Muslims must adhere to the path shown by our Prophet (pbuh) and live like our Prophet (pbuh) for the salvation of Islam:

"The Muslims of the whole world must follow the path shown by Muhammad (saas), the last prophet of Allah, and fully obey all his commands. All Muslims must take the Prophet Muhammad (saas) as a role model and act like him; they must obey all the commandments of Islam. Because only in this way can people be happy and regenerated."(Ataturk in Urdu Publications, Ankara University Faculty of Languages, History and Geography, 1979, p. 70-71)

"One can only display one's respect for the Prophet Muhammad (saas), who carried out a great revolution, by maintaining his ideas and essential values."(Şemsettin Günaltay, Ülkü Magazine, No. 100, p.)

Ataturk always carried a copy of the Qur'an with him and enjoyed listening to the Qur'an. He was sometimes greatly influenced by the commentaries he read as he worked and would ask,

`O My Lord... Those who do not believe in the Qur'an are unbelievers. How can they show us the way? We must ensure that the entire world reads this. My soul rejoices as I read it. Do you feel the same?`

Ataturk frequently expressed his love of and admiration for our Prophet (saas), and described his moral values, powerful faith and leadership as exemplary.

Those who doubt that he is a true prophet should look at this map and read the epic of Badr. The victory that the Prophet Muhammad (saas) won with a handful of devout Muslims against the vast and wealthy horde of the Qur'aysh is not the work of a mortal man. That battle is the most explicit proof of his prophethood. (Ataturk and Religious Education, Department of Religious Affairs Press, p. 2)

"He was the first and greatest servant of Allah. Millions of people today follow in his path. Your name and mine will vanish, but he is immortal to the end."(Dr. Utkan Kocatürk, Ataturk's Views and Ideas, Ataturk and Religious Education, A. Gürtaş, p. 26)

Muhammad Moustafa first gained the love, respect and trust of his people without being a prophet ... He worked for twenty years, amid countless dangers and facing endless troubles and difficulties, and after succeeding in his task as prophet of building Islam... he attained the loftiest abode in paradise. (1922 (Ataturk's S.D. I, p. 262-263))

Ataturk several times expressed the importance and essential nature of religion for the Turkish nation.

... THERE IS NO POSSIBILITY OF NATIONS WITHOUT FAITH SURVIVING. EVERY INDIVIDUAL NEEDS A PLACE TO LEARN ABOUT RELIGION, RELIGIOUS MATTERS AND FAITH. That place is school. But in the same way that we need higher schools, and people with higher education in all subjects, we must have high institutions to raise true scholars to establish the truth of our faith, and who have the intellectual and scientific ability to engage in profound research.

Ataturk also said that the Holy Qur'an must be adopted as a guide in all spheres of life. In 1923, he entered a class on moral values that was being taught at the Dar'ul Hilafat al-Aliya Madrassa in Konya and asked a student by the name of Hamdi Zade Hamdi to expound on the verse **"Allah commands you to return to their owners the things you hold on trust and, when you judge between people, to judge with justice. How excellent is what Allah exhorts you to do! Allah is All-Hearing, All-Seeing"** (Surat an-Nisa, 58) and clarify the moral principles therein.

Once the student had done this, Ataturk expressed his feelings and ideas by telling the teacher and students **"I REGARD THIS VERSE AS THE SOLE PROOF OF OUR SUCCESS."** (Ataturk in All Respects, Altiner, Ankara, 1962, p. 487, related from Mahmut Yağmur)

During the worst days of the War of Independence, Kerim Pasha expounded on the verse of the Qur'an reading **"THE HAND OF Allah IS UPON THEM"** and said that, as the verse says, they would overcome all difficulties with His help. Ataturk then replied:

"Beloved, THE HAND OF ALLAH IS UPON THEM ALL... THE NATION WILL OBEY ALLAH'S COMMAND AND, AS YOU SAY, WHAT WE OBTAIN AS THE NATION WILL BE GOOD AND AUSPICIOUS. I ASK YOU NOT TO WITHOLD YOUR PRAYERS. THE EFFORT COMES FROM US, BUT ALL HELP AND EASE COMES FROM ALLAH, WHO IS ETERNAL." (Collected Works of Ataturk, Vol. 4, p. 137. Ataturk also included this in his Speeches.)

Ataturk emphasized the importance of religious education as follows:

... Our religion has never demanded that women lag behind men. WHAT Allah COMMANDS IS FOR MUSLIM MEN AND WOMEN TO BE EDUCATED BY LEARNING THE FAITH TOGETHER. MEN AND WOMEN HAVE AN OBLIGATION TO SEEK THIS KNOWLEDGE AND EDUCATION AND GO WHERE THEY FIND IT AND EQUIP THEMSELVES WITH IT.

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